

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the status of the claims will be as is shown below. This listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in the present application.

1-22 (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A video game apparatus, comprising:

a ~~foothold~~ movement instruction input section that inputs an instruction to move a player character between ~~footholds on a world map~~ predetermined locations to which the player character can move on a map where a plurality of footholds are arranged;

a ~~foothold~~ movement section that moves the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations in accordance with the instruction to move the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;

a time lapse section that updates a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game when the player character is moved between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;

a rule storage that stores a rule to be set in accordance with the updated time unit, the rules being independent of independently of the foothold the predetermined locations to which the player character is moved;

a rule judge that determines, with reference to the stored rule ~~and in accordance with the updated time unit~~, a rule applicable when the video game advances, and that updates the rule based on the updated time unit;

an instruction input device that inputs an instruction to advance the video game;

a rule violation determiner that determines whether the determined rule is violated based on the instruction to advance the video game; and

a penalty processor that imposes a predetermined penalty when the determined rule is violated[[,]]

~~wherein a foothold is a predetermined location on a world map to which the player character may be moved, thereby advancing events in the game.~~

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23, further comprising:

an instruction executer that executes processing in accordance with the instruction to advance the video game,

wherein the rule violation determiner determines whether a result of the processing executed in accordance with the instruction to advance the video game is against the determined rule.

26. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23,  
wherein the rule applicable when the video game advances is divided into multiple groups,  
and

wherein the rule judge determines a rule that belongs to a group in accordance with the updated time unit as the rule applicable when the video game advances.

27. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23,  
wherein a number of rules applicable when the video game advances is at least two, and

wherein the rule judge increases the number of rules applicable when the video game advances.

28. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23,  
wherein the instruction input device inputs an instruction to operate a player character,  
wherein the video game apparatus further comprises a characteristic value storage that  
stores a characteristic value of the player character that varies as the video game progresses, and  
wherein the penalty processor varies the stored characteristic value of the player character.

29. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 28,  
wherein multiple player characters can be controlled from the instruction input device,  
wherein the rule violation determiner judges a player character that violates the determined  
rule based on the instruction to operate the player character, and  
wherein the penalty processor imposes the predetermined penalty on the player character  
that violates the rule.

30. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23,  
wherein the player character can execute multiple types of operations,  
wherein the instruction input device inputs a type of operation to be executed by the player  
character, and  
wherein the penalty processor limits the types of operations that can be executed by the  
player character to impose the penalty.

31. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 30, wherein multiple player characters can be controlled from the instruction input device, wherein the rule violation determiner judges a player character that violates the determined rule based on the instruction to advance the video game, and wherein the penalty processor imposes the predetermined penalty on the player character that violates the rule.

32. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 23, further comprising:  
an item storage that stores items provided to the player as the video game progresses, and wherein the penalty processor deletes a predetermined item stored in the item storage to impose the penalty.

33. (Currently Amended) A video game apparatus, comprising:  
a ~~foothold~~ movement instruction input section that inputs an instruction to move a player character between ~~footholds on a world map where a plurality of footholds are arranged~~ predetermined locations to which the player character can move on a map;  
a ~~foothold~~ movement section that moves the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations in accordance with the instruction to move the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;  
a time lapse section that updates a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game when the player character is moved between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;  
a rule storage that stores a rule to be set in accordance with the updated time unit,

the rules being independent of independently of the foothold the predetermined locations to  
which the player character is moved;

a rule judge that determines, with reference to the stored rule ~~and in accordance with the~~  
~~updated time unit~~, a rule applicable when the video game advances, and that updates the rule  
based on the updated time unit;

an instruction input device that inputs an instruction to advance the video game;

a rule violation determiner that determines whether the determined rule is violated based on  
the instruction to advance the video game;

a penalty processor that imposes a predetermined penalty when the determined rule is  
violated; and

an item storage that stores items provided to the player as the video game progresses,  
~~wherein a foothold is a predetermined location on a world map to which the player~~  
~~character may be moved, thereby advancing events in the game;~~

wherein the penalty processor deletes a predetermined item stored in the item storage to  
impose the penalty,

wherein the item storage stores the items given to the player by classifying the items into  
groups based on a value,

wherein the rule violation determiner determines the degree of the violation of the rule  
when the rule violation determiner determines that the determined rule is violated, and

wherein the penalty processor deletes an item in a group selected in accordance with the  
degree of the violation of the determined rule.

34. (Previously Presented) A video game apparatus according to claim 23, further comprising:

a violation history storage that stores a history of determined violations,  
wherein the penalty processor imposes the predetermined penalty based on the stored history of violations.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 34, further comprising:

an instruction executor that executes processing in accordance with the instruction to advance the video game,

wherein the rule violation determiner determines whether a result of the processing executed in accordance with the instruction to advance the video game is against the determined rule.

37. (Currently Amended) A video game apparatus having a memory that stores a video game program and a processor that executes the video game program, the video game program causing the processor to execute:

inputting an instruction to move a player character between predetermined locations to which the player character can move on a map ~~footholds on a world map where a plurality of~~ footholds are arranged;

moving the player character between ~~footholds~~ predetermined locations on a map to which the player character can move in accordance with the instruction to move the player character between the predetermined locations ~~footholds~~;

updating a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game when the player character is moved between the predetermined locations ~~footholds~~;

storing a rule to be set in accordance with the updated time unit, ~~independently of the foothold~~ the rules being independent of the predetermined locations to which the player character is moved;

determining, with reference to the stored rule ~~and in accordance with the updated time unit~~, a rule applicable when the video game advances;

updating the rule based on the updated time unit;

inputting an instruction to advance the video game;

determining whether the determined rule is violated based on the instruction to advance the video game; and

imposing a predetermined penalty when the determined rule is violated[[,]]

~~wherein a foothold is a predetermined location on a world map to which the player character may be moved, thereby advancing events in the game.~~

38. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus of claim 37, wherein the video game program further causes the processor to execute:

storing a history of violations,

wherein the predetermined penalty is imposed in accordance with the stored history of violations.

39. (Currently Amended) A method for advancing a video game executed by a computer, comprising:

inputting an instruction to move a player character between predetermined locations to which the player character can move on a map ~~footholds on a world map where a plurality of footholds are arranged;~~

moving the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations in accordance with the instruction to move the player character between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;

updating a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game when the player character is moved between ~~footholds~~ the predetermined locations;

storing a rule to be set in accordance with the updated time unit, ~~independently of the foothold~~ the rules being independent of the predetermined locations to which the player character is moved;

determining, with reference to the stored rule ~~and in accordance with the updated time unit,~~ a rule applicable when the video game advances;

updating the rule based on the updated time unit;

inputting an instruction to advance the video game;

determining whether the determined rule is violated based on the instruction to advance the video game; and

imposing a predetermined penalty when the determined rule is violated[[,]]

~~wherein a foothold is a predetermined location on a world map to which the player character may be moved, thereby advancing events in the game.~~



40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 39, further comprising:  
storing a history of violations,  
wherein the predetermined penalty is imposed in accordance with the stored history of violations.

41. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a video game program is recorded, the video game program causing a computer to execute:

inputting an instruction to move a player character between predetermined locations to which the player character can move on a map ~~footholds on a world map where a plurality of footholds are arranged;~~

moving the player character between the predetermined locations ~~footholds~~ in accordance with the instruction to move the player character between the predetermined locations ~~footholds~~;

updating a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game when the player character is moved between the predetermined locations ~~footholds~~;

storing a rule to be set in accordance with the updated time unit, ~~independently of the foothold~~ the rules being independent of the predetermined locations to which the player character is moved;

determining, with reference to the stored rule ~~and in accordance with the updated time unit,~~ a rule applicable when the video game advances;

updating the rule based on the updated time unit;

inputting an instruction to advance the video game;

determining whether the determined rule is violated based on the instruction to advance the video game; and

imposing a predetermined penalty when the determined rule is violated[[,]]

~~wherein a foothold is a predetermined location on a world map to which the player character may be moved, thereby advancing events in the game.~~

42. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium according to claim 41, the video game program causing the computer to further execute:

storing a history of violations,

wherein the predetermined penalty is imposed in accordance with the stored history of violations.

43. (Cancelled)

44. (Currently Amended) The video game apparatus according to claim [[43]] 23,

wherein a time unit of a virtual concept in the video game is updated in a non-cyclic manner, and

wherein the rules, determined by the rule judge, are not repeated as the player character moves between footholds.